

# THE ASYLUM

*Quarterly Journal of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society*

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

P. Scott Rubin

It was great seeing so many members of our Society at the A.N.A. Convention and to meet in person those whom I had only known by name. I know I had a good time at the convention and hope that many of you will join us next year in Orlando. In the mean time, to fill the meeting gap from August to August, our Board of Governors has voted to establish regional chairpersons to organize N.B.S. educational gatherings around the country. If you would like to represent your region of the country, please contact me to discuss potential responsibilities. Fred Lake has already volunteered to be a regional chairperson, and will begin by arranging an N.B.S. gathering at the 1992 F.U.N. Convention.

I wish to thank Armand Champa for the wonderful exhibit of Numismatic Literature he displayed at the A.N.A. convention. If you missed the convention or somehow made the convention and missed his exhibit, you missed, without a doubt, the best visual of the whole affair. Look for a report on the exhibit and on the Exhibit catalogue produced by George Kolbe elsewhere in this issue. I also wish to thank N.B.S. member Michael Hodder for his delightful talk at the General Meeting, the text of which is carried in this issue. By the response of the audience, I know that it was one of the highlights of the convention.

Finally, the A.N.A. Board has approved our request to have an exhibition class for Numismatic Literature starting at next year's convention in Orlando. Once the motion was approved, our Board voted unanimously to call it the Aaron Feldman award. N.B.S, through the generous help of our membership, has funded a \$3,000 endowment for the prize. Thanks for all the support. The description of the award as furnished to the A.N.A. is all encompassing and should allow a great deal of latitude in participating:

Class 22 - Numismatic Literature - Aaron Feldman Memorial.  
Printed and manuscript, published or unpublished; literature  
dealing with all numismatic subjects, American or Foreign,  
Ancient or Modern.

I hope you will continue your support of our organization, by coming to regional meetings, writing for *The Asylum*, and, by all means, exhibiting at next year's A.N.A. Convention.

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## DEVELOPMENT OF THE CATALOGUER'S STYLE

Michael Hodder

*[The following is a transcription of Mr. Hodder's talk at the 1991 N.B.S. General Meeting. We are greatly indebted to him for the insights it contains, and for the permission to print it ...ed]*

I wish I had some funny things to say to keep in the spirit of what's been going on, but I think this may be a little more serious. I am, by background, a historian; a medievalist which is to say that is what I studied in school - medieval French and English history. I did not really collect coins, although when I was twelve years old I did collect Roman denarii of which I had about twelve, the twelve Caesars. This was primarily to have little pieces to show me pictures of the emperors I was reading about. So I had no real collecting experience, and I don't collect anything now except information. I had never seen a U.S. coin of any sort, except what I had for pocket change up until February of 1980 when I was hired by Sotheby's to be an apprentice coin cataloguer. I joined the firm on a Monday, was put on probation for six months, and on Tuesday was given the Luther M. Otto collection of Large Cents to prepare for auction sale. Previously, I had never seen a large cent and, frankly, did not know that they even existed. They gave me a copy of Sheldon and a copy of the *A.N.A. Grading Standards Handbook*. So you can imagine me sitting there in my Sotheby's three piece pinstriped suit with a 1793 Chain Cent in one hand and a copy of the ANA Grading Standards in the other. *The Handbook* notes that for "VF" the line of hair should be broken, and I look at the coin, and Yes! it's broken, so VF.

The Otto sale happened in June of 1980, and the catalogue descriptions (I'm going to try to keep this focused on the development of the cataloguing style) were nothing more than the date of the coin, the Sheldon number, the grade as best as I could do it, and a guess at rarity - pure guess mostly taken out of Sheldon. I might have said there is a scratch here, or a flaw there, or a clip, but that was essentially it. At the sale, my catalogue descriptions were reviewed by Denis Loring and Tony Terranova, who had wonderful laughs over the grading, and who snapped up some coins at fairly cheap prices. They did, however, tell me that I got all the attributions correct, which I thought was pretty good considering my inexperience.

Moving on in time to 1983, I had been at Sotheby's for three years and was the head of their coin department, and received what turned out to be two major collections. The first was the Scott-Kinnear collection of United States Gold, which was very heavy in Pioneer, Territorial and San Francisco issues. The second was the S. Hallock du Pont Collection of U.S. Gold Coins including a complete set of Stellas, and a really remarkable collection of European Gold coins including a 100 Ducats of Leopold the Hogmouth of Austria, a gorgeous big, heavy piece. My catalogue descriptions by 1983 were pretty much as they had been in 1980, but now I started noticing things like surface quality, particularly in San Francisco mint issues, and the quality of the strike. I had a little better handle on rarities, and, more importantly, I started sticking-in some

historical information, primarily on the territorial issues. This was possible primarily because it was stolen directly from Don Kagin's book, which had just been published. But the important thing is (and I should note at this stage standing in front of a group of collectors of numismatic literature, that I feel something like a lion at a big game hunter's convention) that I am trying to describe to you how a cataloguer's style develops through my own personal experiences. I had absolutely no awareness in 1983 of things like pedigree. You must remember that I had never collected coins, did not know anything about numismatic literature, and had had no connection with any U.S. auction firms whatsoever. I was in a rather sheltered environment at Sotheby, Parke Bernet, or Sotheby's at the time, which considered itself to be the absolute pinnacle of auctions and did not have to worry how the rest of the world did it, because we did it the Sotheby's way.

There was no awareness of pedigree, but I had by 1983 begun to wonder or to make numismatic speculations. For instance, Hallock du Pont had a complete set of Stellas, all four varieties. In cataloguing them, I noticed that the striations tended to go in different directions from coin to coin, and I put some information and my speculations in the catalogue descriptions. That was the first time I ever ventured into print with some of my own personal feelings or research, and it became the basis for what I did later on with Sellas. I think this phenomenon (although Carlson disagrees) indicates that the planchets had been adjusted prior to striking. These are not roller striations as Carlson suggests, if you are familiar with our controversy.

Between 1983 and 1985 I moved from Sotheby's to Spink & Son in New York, where I ran their operation for a short time before they folded (through no fault of mine as it was doomed from the beginning). And then in April 1984 I was hired by Bowers and Merena in Wolfeboro to catalogue their foreign coins.

Between April of 1984 and January 1985, I must have showed Dave some interest, talent or ability, or perhaps been stupid enough to volunteer to catalogue some tokens. So in March, 1985, B & M had their March Sale, which was very heavy into medals, tokens, and exnumia. An important consignment in that sale had come from a noted Southwestern collector, Mr. John J. Ford Jr. Now I am trying to pitch this to collectors of numismatic literature and am not suggesting that what I write is collectible, but if you can look into my work, you may use the basis of what I am saying and see how a cataloguer's style develops. If you compare what I had done with foreign coins in the B & M auction sales in 1984 with what I had done in the March sale of 1985 with J. J.'s material, you will see that a watershed has been reached, a real sea change, which I ascribe in large measure to John's attempt to impose internal consistency upon my catalogue descriptions.

Today, when I catalogue a coin, I use a dictaphone. I have the coin in front of me, a dictaphone next to me, and the coin, which has some basic information on its work envelope. My job is to write a word picture of that coin so that someone who can not see it will feel confident enough to go ahead and buy it. This will include things like denomination, date, mint mark, grade,



rarity, surface condition, edge condition, pedigree, prior auction appearances, and comparisons with other coins. By doing all that on a dictaphone machine off the top of the head, it is inevitable that anyone is going to come out with a bit of a hodgepodge from one lot to another. In one description the grade will follow directly after the date. In the second one, you will say the date, see a big scratch and say "scratch, VF-35." Ford likes consistency, and his attempt was to impose that discipline upon my descriptions. Although I am sure John will disagree as they were not all as perfect as he would like to have seen them, many, if not all, of the descriptions in the March Sale of 1985 follow a single, set cadence. There was an identification of the object being sold, followed by a grade, followed by a description of surface conditions, followed by indications of rarity, followed by any other numismatic information I wanted to put in, followed by some historical digression designed either to indicate the rarity of the piece or to persuade somebody that it is interesting enough to go ahead and bid on.

Skipping ahead in time, between 1985 and 1987, I catalogued a number of other collections, but most importantly I did the Taylor Sale (March 1987), and the Dreyfuss Collection (June 1987). Those were, for me, two landmark sales in which I tried to incorporate what I had learned from John about internal consistency in catalogue descriptions with my basic historical interests in coins. The Taylor Collection arrived in Wolfeboro in November of 1986, and, for some reason, Bowers decided to set a schedule for March, 1987. Now those of you who collect Colonial coins probably know that there were literally hundreds and hundreds of coins. Many of them were unattributed, none with any indication of rarity, and none with any real solid pedigree information. And prior to that March Sale, I had never really seen a Colonial coin, let alone catalogue one. So the collection arrived in November, and we had approximately a month to complete the catalogue for delivery to the printers. My responsibilities involved cataloguing only Taylor's Connecticut. Most people are not aware of that I did only the Connecticut. Dave Bowers did all the other Colonials in that sale. My portion, all the Connecticut, was completed in five days. If you can imagine my desk, I had Taylor's coins in front of me, on my left was Garrett III, above was Pine Tree E.A.C. 1975, on the other side were various Bowers and Merena catalogues, and on my extreme left was New Netherlands 60th Sale. [audience: and an ANA Grading Guide?]. No ANA Grading Guide! By that time I had sort of a feel for coins. What I would do is after grading the coin, I would refer to all these various catalogues to get a sense of where it might exist in the Condition Census. I would call guys like Jeff Rock and ask for help as to whether this is a rarity, and where does it fall into the CC.

I would get all this information down onto a piece of paper, and by now I had come up with a little trick. When I catalogue a coin, any series of coins, I start by creating a template for myself, an idea I directly stole from Ford. The template is going to be the cadence of the auction catalogue description. Each bit of information that I am going to put into the catalogue is placed in sequence on the template. Then, when I am sitting in front of the

dictaphone, I have only to fill in the blanks. And that's how I could do the Taylor sale in only five days, because I had some internal structure into which I could plug the information. The CC's were still guesses. References to other pieces sold and how Taylor's coins stacked up with those other pieces still were guesses, but they were getting a little bit better.

In the Taylor Sale for the first time, I started playing with things like emission sequences. Since I had such a large collection of Connecticut, I could look at common reverses married to different obverse dies, and noticing die breaks, begin to make stabs at die emission sequences. While many of these were childish as I had really nothing much to go by prior to that, some of them will still actually hold. In the Taylor sale, I decided to throw in information which generally does not get put into catalogue descriptions such as the weights of coins, which I consider to be quite important. Other catalogers do put in weights of coins. Stack's did until recently when their scale broke. But I also threw in characteristics like diameters and reverse die axes of coins.

Please remember that my background is history. I studied coins at the A.N.S. at the Summer Seminar for Graduate Students in 1978 primarily as a way of getting a paid trip to New York where my wife lived, as I was in school in Berkeley and had no money and no way to get to New York. So I applied for the ANS grant, it was awarded, and that is how I got to New York.

As a result of the A.N.S. program, I learned the importance of the technical information you can gather from reporting diameters, weights and die axes of coins, much of which I put into the Taylor catalogue descriptions. I don't know how any of you felt about seeing that in the sale, and while it probably seemed fairly alien to many of you, it was basic to what I am now doing with early Colonials. In a commercial auction firm, the goal is to sell the coin, with any other objectives being secondary. Some firms don't care about having any of the extra descriptive material at all. The Bowers firm is one of the few around that encourages the historical and technical information in the catalogue description. However, where you place it can be the problem. You have, perhaps, a Connecticut Copper, Miller 1.1-A. The date and the attribution number come first; then you have a problem as what to put next. Do you stick the rarity in next, followed by the grade, followed by the weight, and all the rest of the stuff, or do you put the grade ahead of the weight, and so on. I still have not settled in my mind where grade should go. David [Bowers] prefers grade directly after the denomination and date, because he believes that nobody reads anything other than that in the catalogue descriptions, and some dealers have told me that's quite true. I tend to put the grade in pretty much where I feel like putting it in dependent on how strongly I think I am going to get criticized by Bowers and how I feel that particular morning.

The Dreyfuss sale which I did in June, 1987, was a sale of medals and tokens, most of which I had never seen before as types let alone specific pieces. Dreyfuss was a Washington D.C. based collector whose collection came to us through, and with the assistance and the joint billing of, Joe Levine. Joe packed up the collection in cardboard boxes, the contents of which seemed fairly random, and they were shipped up to our bank vaults in Wolfeboro, and then



to my office at Bowers and Merena. My office is perhaps from that wall there to this chair here. There were thousands and thousands and thousands of items that I had to unpack and lay out all over the floor. I had the floor and every shelf covered with medals and plaques. I had to be careful where I moved my chair so that I wouldn't roll over something. If someone wanted to come and see me, they had to knock on the door first, and we had to prepare a little path to my desk for fear of stepping on something. Nothing was at all organized whatsoever. In both the Dreyfuss and Taylor Sales, I began doing things like using single line headnotes to capture the reader's eye and also to convey information such as the rarity, the desirability, or the importance of a piece: **Andrew Johnson Silver Indian Peace Medal 62mm**. The descriptions were now more internally consistent because I had been getting used to what I had learned, and what I had been taught by Ford. I had better guesses at the rarity of items, as I did also in the Taylor sale, and was now beginning to make references to past sales of similar items. I now had pedigree information. There was a lot more numismatic speculation in the catalogue descriptions, and I was putting in historical 6 point type footnotes.

Now this all probably sounds extremely familiar to you collectors of numismatic literature. It more than likely sounds like New Netherlands auction cataloguing style. I have thought about this a lot, because I don't like to borrow from anybody. I am not certain that my style is a conscious borrowing from New Netherlands, or from the later Pine Tree sales. What I do think is that my cataloguing style is a combination of three particular factors. 1) John Ford's influence, which in my numismatic growth or development, has been predominant or paramount. John has been a remarkable influence upon me. 2) Dave Bower's influence. David is the premier showman/salesman in numismatics. He is the best marketer in numismatics I have seen, perhaps after B. Max Mehl. His influence has stressed getting the coin sold in the very first sentence fragment of the catalogue description in case potential bidders don't read any further along. 3) And the third factor is the use of techniques like single or double line headnotes to indicate the rarity or desirability of items, the use of bold type within a catalogue description text to draw the eye of the reader directly to **Rarity 7+** or **Only one sold this century**, and the use of 6 point type historical notes after the catalogue description, which one may read or not read as he pleases. These all seem to me to be sort of logical and natural solutions to the problem of how to catalogue coins. So the three influences on my cataloguing style are John Ford, Dave Bowers and what I feel is the logical and proper way of cataloguing a coin. In me, you see somebody who came to this brand new with no background, and whose style has slowly developed into what I hope to be considered my own particular personal style; but one whose style could not obviously get away from the most important influence in numismatic cataloguing in numismatic history in the States, at any rate, that of John J. Ford of the New Netherlands Rare Coin Company.

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## HAVE YOU CHECKED HEAD'S

L. V. Reppeteau

For over a hundred years, whenever numismatists gathered to discuss ancient Greek coinage, an often heard inquiry has been: "Have you checked Head's?" Translation of such numismatic shorthand being: "What does the *Historia Numorum*," a manual of Greek numismatics, by Barclay V. Head, have to say on the subject?" Alas, while many know the book, few know the man who wrote such an authoritative and enduring text.

Barclay Vincent Head, born January 2, 1844, in Ipswich, Suffolk, England, was the second son of an old and respected Quaker family. In fact, the Barclay of his name is in honor of one of his Quaker ancestors, Robert Barclay (1648-1692), author of *Apology of the People Called Quaker*. Young Head received his education at a local grammar school, which he left at the age of seventeen. (It should be noted that in Britain at the time, "grammar school" was one in which both classical Greek and Latin were taught.) Barclay must have been a natural scholar, for next we find him at the tender age of twenty being appointed on February 12, 1864 as an assistant to William Vaux, the British Museum's first Keeper of Coins and Medals (1860-1870).

Fortunately for young Barclay, this was the golden age for classical numismatics in England. Queen Victoria sat on the throne, and the far corners of the world were awash with Englishmen, gentlemen whose adventures busily liberated archaeological treasures which flowed back to that great attic and cellar of the Empire - The British Museum. Part of these riches were packets of Ancient Greek coins, coins in need of identification and cataloguing. If ever there was a man for the time and the task, it was Barclay Head, who with a single-minded purpose, worked 10-12 hours a day, six days a week sorting, analyzing, classifying, and cataloguing coinage of long gone civilizations. Upon the retirement of Reginald Stuart Poole in January 1893, Head was appointed Keeper of Coins and Medals, a position he held for the next thirteen years until his retirement in 1906.

The first of Head's mountains of contributions to numismatic literature appears to have been a paper on "Anglo-Saxon Coins with Runic Legends" published in 1868 by the Numismatic Society of London. In the next year he became "Joint Editor" of *The Numismatic Chronicle*, a position he was to fill for the next thirty-one years. It was also in 1869 that he wed Mary Corkran, daughter of an Irish author and journalist John Frazer Corkran. They were married for thirty-two years and had one daughter.

In 1870, the Coin and Medals Department of the Museum embarked upon producing the epic series *Catalogue of Greek Coins in the British Museum*, the first of what was to become a twenty-nine volume series was published in 1873 with the project finally completed in 1927. Head was to be involved in the actual writing/editing of ten of those books.

1880 saw the birth of one of the most enduring numismatic books to be published by the British Museum, Head's *Guide to the Principal Gold and*



*Silver Coins of the Ancients, 700BC to AD 1.* Its express purpose was to popularize ancient coins for both the general public and for the collector. In this, the book was an outstanding success. Public acceptance was so great that after only one year, there was a need for a second edition. Since that time, there have been some twenty reprints.

In 1932, Sir George F. Hill, then Director and Principal Librarian of the Museum updated the format and text. It was then reissued under the new title of *A Guide to the Principal Coins of the Greeks from circ 700BC to AD 270*. A second revision was made in 1959 by John Walker, then Keeper of the Coins, with a reprint in 1965.

However Head's most famous work has proved to be that which is often called the "Bible of Greek Numismatics," his *Historia Numorum*, first published in 1877 by Clarendon Press, Oxford. In 1911, after his retirement from the Museum, he rewrote the work being assisted by that famous trio of British numismatists of Hill, George McDonald, and Warwick Wroth. The second edition was increased from 807 to 966 pages and is available in reprint form.

Even though Head had received an honorary degree from Durham University in 1887, and another from Oxford in 1905, recognition of his work was slow in coming within his own country. But across the Channel, it was another story. Early in his career, Heidelberg University, the French and Prussian Academies, along with numerous continental societies commenced bestowing degrees and awards in recognition of his work and contributions to the numismatic community.

Barclay was justly proud of his various degrees and honors gleaned over the years. However, it has been said that he was proudest of the *Corolla Numismatica*, written by thirty scholars of six nations, edited by George E. Hill, and dedicated to Head upon his retirement from the Museum in 1906.

Head passed away at the age of 70 in London on June 12, 1914. One of the best obituaries and tributes that I have seen was written by Hill, who had entered the museum's Coin Department in 1893. He refers to Head as "... a gentle and amiable scholar ..." and that "Head's work should rank as a classic in the annals of numismatics; severely as he limited his scope, he was no narrow specialist, and his judgement, deliberate, was yet instinctively so sound that even his few mistakes are illuminating."

The catalogue of Greek Coins in the British Museum in 29 volumes was commenced in 1890 and completed in 1927. Head authored eight of these and collaborated on an additional two. All were reprinted in 1963 at Bologna.

#### Co-authored

- Volume 2: *Sicily*, with R. S. Poole, and P. Gardner, 1876, 292pp, ill
- Volume 3: *Trace*, with P. Gardner, 1876, 292pp, ill

#### Authored

- Volume 5: *Macedonia*, 1879, 200pp, ill
- Volume 8: *Central Greece*, 1884, 158pp, ill
- Volume 11: *Attica, Megaris, Aegina*, 1888, 174pp, ill



- Volume 12: *Corinth, Colonies of Corinth*, 1889, 173pp, ill
- Volume 16: *Ionia*, 1892, 453pp, ill
- Volume 18: *Carin and the Islands*, 1897, 325pp, ill
- Volume 22: *Lydia*, 1901, 440pp, ill
- Volume 25: *Phrygia*, 1906, 491pp, ill

#### Also by Head

- *Synopsis of the Contents of the British Museum*, selected coins exhibited in electrotpe, 1872, 48pp
- *On the Chronological Sequence of the coins of Syracuse*, 1874, 80pp
- *Coinage of Lydia and Persia*, 1877, 59pp, ill (reprinted 1967, Pegasus Publishing, San Diego)
- *Synopsis of the contents of the British Museum ... A guide to the select Greek and Roman coins exhibited in electrotpe*, 1880, 128pp
- *Guide to the Principal Gold and Silver Coins of the Ancients, 700BC to AD 1*, 1880, 128pp, ill;
- *Historia Numorum: A Manual of Greek Numismatics*, 1887, 807pp, ill; enlarged edition, 1911

#### Miscellaneous Papers (the author would be pleased to know of others)

- *Anglo-Saxon Coins with Runic Legends*, 1868, communicated to the Numismatic Society of London
- *On the Religious Character of Greek Coins*, 1870
- *On The Chronological Sequence of the Coins of Syracuse*, 1874
- *Metrological Notes on the Ancient Electrum Coins Struck Between the Lebantion Wars and the Accession of Daricas*, 1875, 53pp
- *Himaryite and Other Arabian Imitations of Athenian Coins*, 1878
- *On The Chronological Sequence of the Coins of Spheesus*, 1880
- *On The Chronological Sequence of the Coins of Boeotia*, 1881
- *Remarks on two Unique Coins of Aetna and Zanele*, 1883, Numismatic Chronicle, Series 3, Volume 3
- *Electrum Coins and Their Specific Gravity*, 1887, Numismatic Chronicle, Series 3, Volume 7
- *Archaic Coins of Cyrene*, 1891
- *The Greek Autonomous Coins from the Cabinet of the Late Mr Edward Wigan*, nd, 62pp

Quote without comment: "The Bibliomania meeting plays to a full house. Anyone who claims there's more numismatic scholarship in that room than on the entire bourse floor will get no argument from me."

... Denis Loring in his report on the A.N.A. in *Penny Wise*, Sept, 1991

## A.M. SMITH'S *COINS AND COINAGE*: A TRIAL LIST

Pete Smith

A. M. Smith<sup>1</sup> published three numismatic references between 1881 and 1886, with *Coins and Coinage*, *The United States Mint, Philadelphia* being issued continuously during that period. This title evolved into the *Visitor's Guide and History of the United States Mint, Philadelphia* which was published concurrently 1885-1886. His major work was the *Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Gold and Silver Coins of the World* published in 1886.

Cataloguers of numismatic literature have been aware that there are several varieties of these publications. There are at least nine varieties each of the *Visitor's Guide* and of *The Encyclopaedia*. It is, however, *Coins and Coinage* that has had a seemingly uncountable number of varieties. The purpose of this paper, then, will be the development of a trial list of them. While I expect that additional listings will be discovered, I recognize the list is incomplete, but what better way to start.

Smith also published a newsletter, *Coin Collectors' of the United States Illustrated Guide*. In his issue for August 1881 he noted: "We have now a work that stands second to none, it will be issued in November. It will have several hundred illustrations of all the processes of how money is made in the U. S. Mint and the early ages of Europe. Full and complete history of American Colonial coins, and of all the U. S. coins with the value of the rare coins. Illustrated so that any child can learn and understand it, no labor or expense will be saved to make this little work a standard on coins. Its price will be within reach of all, the cost of the book will be 50 cents, paper cover. But to all those who subscribe for it, before it is out, we only charge 50 cents in heavy paper, cloth bound."

*Coins and Coinage* was, prior to the publication of George Evans' *Illustrated History of the United States Mint*, the standard reference on mint activities. Both books use many of the same illustrations, and both were sold in quantities, in excess of 100,000 each, that would make them best sellers by today's standards. While we believe that *Coins and Coinage* and the *Visitor's Guide* were sold over the counter at the Mint to people taking tours, no records to substantiate that have been located in the National Archives.

Attempting to list the varieties of Smith's *Coin and Coinage* represented a challenge. While dozens of catalogue listings have been checked, their descriptions have usually been incomplete or incorrect. As there has been no standard listing of varieties, few catalogues descriptions contained enough of the diagnostic features to determine the variety.

I currently have six different varieties of *Coins and Coinage* in my collection. Recently, I had the opportunity to examine nine copies in the Eric Newman Library. What astonished me is that his nine were varieties distinct from my six. I do not know what the probability is, but it makes me suspect that there may be many other varieties not included in either collection. In addition, two new varieties were seen at the recent A.N.A. Convention, and



Armand Champa's library contributed three more. So far, these seem to represent five basic editions, with seven minor varieties. Differences in the bindings bring the number of identified variants to 27. Obviously I will not feel comfortable until I start to see more duplicates of those already examined.

This article will include two parts. First will be a description of the variable features that can be used to identify different varieties. Second will be a listing of known varieties.

**Titles:** Take your pick. The commonly used title is *Coins and Coinage*. The best complete title is probably *Coins and Coinage. The United States Mint, Philadelphia, History, Biography, Statistics, Work, Machinery, Products, Officials*. The paper covered copies have an alternate title *Illustrated History of the U.S. Mint*. In hardbound versions through 1884, the paper cover from the softbound edition is bound in as a frontis illustration. A third title *U.S. Mint and Coins*, appears on the spine of some editions. One version has *Coins and Coinage, United States Mint* on the spine.

**Dates:** While several dates appear within the contents of some editions, I have attempted to establish the approximate dates of publication of all. In addition, there are transitional pieces that include new information at the end of old editions, this material being incorporated in the text in later editions. Transitional pieces are designated "E" for early, "M" for middle, and "L" for late. Finally, some editions include material that is presumed to be later than another edition as well as material known to be earlier than that other edition. These are labeled "T" for throwback.

- (1881) *First Edition*. Dated on the cover or frontis illustration. Probably released about November 1881. A letter from Secretary Sherman dated January 1, 1881 appears in the text on page 119.
- (1882) *Second Edition*. Labeled Fourth Edition for reasons still unknown. 1882 is arbitrary date as these versions are later than 1881s and earlier than 1883s. These are the only varieties that indicate an edition number.
- (1883E) Text includes description of the new 1883 five cent piece. Published after the coin was issued February 1, 1883, but before "CENTS" was added to the reverse. A letter from Secretary Folger dated January 1, 1883 appears on page 119.
- (1883L) *Third Edition*. With illustration of "CENTS" reverse on 1883 five cent piece. Published after March 1, 1883.
- (1884) *Fourth Edition*. Dated on frontis illustration; the last page refers to mintage of 1884.
- (1885) *Fifth Edition*. Frontispiece of Daniel Fox, who was appointed 7/1/85. Text includes his biography on pages 1-4.
- (1886) The last page has an ad for Smith's *Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Gold and Silver Coins of the World* published in 1886.



**Binding:** Catalogue descriptions have called the binding calf, goat, roan, sheep, or morocco. As I cannot tell the difference, if there is one, I will simply use the term leather. The following bindings have been used.

1. Paper, seen in cream or peach although pink is more common.
2. Cloth, green, olive or brown; seen only on 1881 edition.
3. Quarter leather, marbled card covers.
4. Half leather, color are confusing. Generally colors run in two ranges: light brown, dark brown or black and red or burgundy. Some colors may be original, some faded or redyed.
5. Full leather, listed in sale catalogues but not seen by this writer.

**Spine:** The imprint exists in at least four varieties, the type probably being distributed between editions. These varieties seen:

- 1 U.S. MINT AND COINS. - A. M. SMITH ("AND" at angle) (1881)
- 2 U.S. MINT AND COINS. \* A. M. SMITH ("AND" curved)
- 3 U.S. MINT AND COINS. \* A. M. SMITH ("AND" at angle)
- 4 COINS AND COINAGE - UNITED STATES MINT

**Pages:** A typical listing may show the page count as 2/120/8. This indicates there are two unnumbered, 120 numbered, and eight unnumbered pages at the end. The paper cover version would omit the first two pages. A blank back page is not included in the count. The frontis illustration and last page are frequently printed back to back with the patterned endpapers.

**Snowden/Fox:** A steel plate engraving of the superintendent of the mint appears as a frontispiece in many varieties. The Snowden portrait was engraved by Samuel Sartain while that of Fox was prepared by John Sartain. Snowden appears in the 1881-1884 editions, but in some copies the engraving was either never present or has been removed. The location of his biography, however, is diagnostic for the five editions - page 43 (1st, 1881); page 48 (2nd, 1882 and 1883E); page 51 (3rd, 1883L, 1884E) and page 37 (4th, 1884L). Fox appears on the frontispiece for the 5th (1885-86) edition with his biography on pages 1-4.

**Size:** Sizes are variable and may be diagnostic although not enough pieces have been seen. Small differences should not be considered significant.

|              |                |                |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| Paper Covers | 4.5x7.7 inches | (1881 or 1882) |
| Paper Covers | 4.6x7.4        | (1885E)        |
| Paper Covers | 4.9x7.5        | (1884E)        |
| Paper Covers | 5.0x7.7        | (1883E)        |
| Paper Covers | 5.1x7.8        | (1884E)        |
| Half Leather | 4.7x7.6        | (1883T)        |
| Half Leather | 4.8x7.7        | (1882)         |
| Half Leather | 4.9x7.7        | (1883M; 1883L) |
| Half Leather | 5.3x7.7        | (1885L)        |
| Half Leather | 5.4x8.1        | (1884L; 1886)  |
| Half Leather | 5.5x8.1        | (1885L)        |

**Endpapers:** They are probably not diagnostic and cannot be used to determine different issues. They are included in the descriptions in an attempt to determine if they are diagnostic.

**Known Varieties:**

- (1881) *First Edition*; dated 1881 on paper cover or frontis illustration; table of contents on pages 2-4; Snowden biography on page 43; pages 2/107/blank leaf.
- a. Cream paper covers, no title on spine (4.5x7.7)
  - b. Green cloth, endpapers with flowers and birds
  - c. Dark olive cloth, endpapers black on blue flowers, spine dash
  - d. Brown cloth
- (1882) *Second Edition*; dated 1881 on cover or frontis illustration; "Fourth Edition" on title page; table of contents 2-4; section on medals - pages 37-47; 7 page Snowden biography begins on page 48; page 119 - Sherman letter dated Jan. 1, 1881; no ancients shown; pages 1/120.
- e. Peach paper covers; 4.5x7.7; one copy seen purchased 10/21/1882
  - f. Burgundy half leather; endpapers white on green leaf; "\*" on spine; 4.8x7.7
  - g. Maroon half leather; endpapers white vines on lavender; 4.9x7.7
  - h. Burgundy full leather, raised spine bands; all edges gilt; thick paper, frontispiece of Snowden
- (1883E) Transitional, title page without edition number, p1-118 same as (1882). Snowden biography page 48; Folger letter dated Jan. 1, 1883 found on page 119. Pages 1/120/8; unnumbered pages 1-6 contain a list of books for sale; unnumbered page 7 has "The New Five Cent Piece." with the first reverse; published after February 1, 1883; unnumbered page 8 has advertisement for Pierce College of Business.
- i. Pink paper covers. (5x7.7)
- (1883M) Transitional, dated 1881 on frontis illustration; Snowden biography on page 51; the "New Five Cent Piece" on 7th unnumbered page. Pages 1/120/8
- j. Dark brown half leather, green leaf endpapers (4.9x7.7)
- (1883L) *Third Edition*: Dated 1881 on frontis illustration; Pages 2/120/8. p47 has "Superintendent's Office," p48-50 "Illustrations" of Roman Coins, p51 repeats "Superintendent's Office;" 4 page Snowden biography begins on p51; p55-118 same as (1882); "New Five Cent Piece" on unnumbered p1 shows both reverses; "CENTS" reverse noted in text; p2-5: "Greck Coins;" p6: books for sale; p7: ad for Webster's dictionary and Smith fpl; p8: ad for Bryant & Stratton College.
- k. Russet half leather, endpapers green on white birds, flowers and leaves. Third type spine with a star.

- (1883T) Throwback edition; Title page marked "Fourth Edition" as (1882); pages 1/120/2; pages 1-120 same as (1882); single sheet glued to back endpaper; first side with advertisement for Webster's Dictionary and Smith fpl; second side with "The New Five Cent Piece" showing both reverses as (1883L).
- l. Black half leather, end papers white leaves and flowers on tan; (4.7x7.6)
- (1884E) Transitional, dated 1884 on cover or frontis illustration. Otherwise organized as 1883L. Frontispiece of Snowden whose biography appears on page 51; "The New Five Cent Piece" with both reverses on the first unnumbered page; pages 1/120/8.
- m. Pink paper covers, no title on spine. (4.9x7.5)
  - n. Pink paper covers, no title on spine. (5.1x7.8)
  - o. Red quarter leather and marbled cardboard covers; frontis illustration on pink paper; fourth spine type "Coins and Coinage - United States Mint" on spine.
- (1884L) *Fourth Edition*. Dated 1884 on cover or frontis illustration; Snowden biography appears on page 37; contents reorganized, with Table of Contents pages 2-4 from (1883E) not matching current page locations; pages 1-36 same as previous, medals section dropped. "The New Five Cent Piece" on page 65. Pages 2/106/21
- p. Pink paper covers (5.0x7.8)
  - q. Brown half leather, endpapers tan leaves and flowers (5.4x8.1)
  - r. Red half leather.
- (1884T) Throwback edition; dated 1881 on frontis illustration, otherwise as 1884L; frontispiece of Snowden with biography on page 37, "The New Five Cent Piece" on page 65; pages 2/106/21.
- s. Brown half leather, endpapers black flowers on green. (5.4x8.1)
  - t. Black half Leather, endpapers white leaves on green. (5.4x8.1)
- (1885E) Transitional, dated 1884 on cover; frontispiece of Fox with biography on pages 1-4 replacing table of contents; pages 105/26.
- u. Pink paper covers, title on spine (4.6x7.4)
- (1885L) *Fifth Edition*. Undated, frontis illustration dropped; frontispiece of Fox with biography pages 1-4 replacing Table of Contents; p5-36 same as (1884L), Snowden biography replaced with Greek coins p37-42; pages 43-105 same as (1884L); five new pages of ancient coins added to end; last page promotes a fixed price list; pages 2/105/21.
- v. Brown half leather. (5.5x8.1)
  - w. Dark brown half leather, endpapers tan leaves. (5.3x7.7)
  - x. Brown half leather, endpapers light green blossoms and leaves, (5.3x7.7)



- y. Red half leather, endpapers black branches on gray. (5.3x7.7)
- z. Green half leather, endpapers black branches on gray. (5.3x7.7)

- (1886) Same organization as (1885L) except last page promotes both fixed price list and Encyclopaedia; pages 2/105/21
- aa. Red or burgundy half leather, endpapers black branches on gray (5.4x8.1)

Sources: Armand Champa Collection  
 Jack Collins Sale 10/1/1983  
 Dan Hamelberg Collection  
 George Kolbe Catalogues, various sales  
 Eric Newman Educational Society library  
 Minnesota Historical Society  
 The author's collection.

<sup>1</sup>The initials have been expanded alternately as Andrew Madson and Andrew Mason.

#### Essex Co. Numismatic & Antiquarian Society Meeting

At the last regular meeting of this society, a "bibliomanaic" member offered for inspection some rare pamphlets and books, the latter being especially delightful to the book-hunter by reason of their lovely uncut condition, and stainless preservation from the vandal work of that abandoned old reprobate Father Time - from whom it is the province of the above society to rescue and preserve mementoes of the past, interesting alike to the numismatist, bookhunter and antiquarian.

Mason's Coin and Stamp Collectors' Magazine, August 1869

### THE PRINTER'S DEVIL

Joel J. Orosz

Prices realized by special editions of nineteenth century coin auction catalogues have crashed! Hardbound, special paper editions have simply gone begging for lack of interested buyers. Are you shocked? Unlax, as Bugs Bunny used to say. Your sneaky columnist did not say that special editions are crashing, rather that they have crashed. And so they have -- long ago, that is - in the latter half of 1881. As chronicled by that learned and often pugnacious

coin merchant Ed. Frossard, in the January 1882 issue of *Numisma*, the story of the bust in the ten-issued-with-thick-paper market makes for fascinating reading today.

In the Summer and Autumn of 1881, the nation's attention was riveted upon its stricken leader, James Abrahm Garfield. Felled on July 2 by a bullet fired by a disappointed office seeker, the President lingered for more than two months, alternately sinking and rallying, before finally dying on September 19. Less momentously, but with similar drama, life was also ebbing out of the market for special edition numismatic catalogues during these anxious weeks. By the time that Ed. Frossard chronicled its sorry state in the first month of 1882, the market for these publications was all but extinct.

Frossard began by noting that special editions have been "regularly issued by the pioneers of the coin trade," and "readily sold at from \$4 to \$10 per copy." "Subsequently," he continued, "with an increase in the number of sales and a consequent decrease in their importance, the prices fell to \$1 or \$2, but were for a long time sustained at those rates." The collapse of this stable market occurred, according to the Sage of Irvington-on-Hudson, because coin sales were by then being held weekly, and often one catalogue was just a repetition of sections from earlier sales. All of this resulted in Frossard's mince-no-words prose, "catalogues of once renowned cabinets bring little more than waste paper."

Frossard hardly disapproved of frequent coin auctions, and he positively endorsed the idea of collecting catalogues of certain sales: "Every collector who collects for information, self culture and with higher aims than a mere accumulation of dates, should have a number of priced catalogues, selected with care, and bearing especially upon the particular branch of numismatics to the study of which he devotes his moments of leisure."

If this was so, why then the dismal market for special editions? Brother Frossard offered a plausible explanation: "Some collectors gather a full series of catalogues, and the uninitiated is frequently astonished to see, at a coin sale, a valuable compendium of numismatic knowledge knocked down for 02¢, while a small, poorly composed, miserably gotten up, and altogether worthless catalogue of some obscure sale will bring \$1- and more. This is not on account of the value of the latter, but simply because A, B, and C, who want to complete their series of catalogues are all bidders for the worthless one they lack, while the more valuable one is already in their collections and hence not wanted." It is fascinating to learn that there were a handful of collectors systematically gathering catalogues by series in the early 1880s, for we have tended to regard numismatic bibliomania as a recent phenomenon. And interestingly, the same dynamic that Frossard identified continues to operate today, for many 19th century catalogues with important contents may be purchased for a mere pittance, while a number of early publications by Stacks or Bowers and Ruddy with relatively undistinguished contents trade for large sums. This is, of course, because of "Frossard's Law:" catalogues collected by series generally fetch better prices than those that are not, and certainly often realize higher prices than their contents can justify.

Frossard, being Frossard, could not resist taking a swipe or two at his fellow coin dealers. John Walter Scott, as usual, was the primary target. "It is true that some malicious persons," wrote Frossard sarcastically, "have persistently spread the rumor that Scott's catalogues up to N°15 are a myth, and that several numbers were 'skipped,' also that he never held a sale before 1878, and could not produce half the number claimed to have been issued, but the fact of their existence cannot for a moment be doubted, even if no one has ever seen a copy, when vouched for by so high an authority as Mr. Scott himself." There is some truth, but only some, in Frossard's charge. The Scott firm emitted a total of 331 catalogues, some primarily of stamps, others predominately featuring coins, some when Scott ran the company, others when the Calman brothers were the proprietors. In all this activity it may be possible to find a certain amount of misnumbering and confusion in sequence. Thanks to N.B.S. member John Adams, however, we can conclusively absolve Scott of the charge of never having held a sale before 1878. "The Great Boaster," as Frossard often called him, issued two numismatic sales in 1877, including the first in his series, which contained the discovery of the 1793 Clover Leaf Cent!

Perhaps to prevent Scott from making similar charges about Frossard's past sales, the editor of *Numisma* included in his article a complete list of his own auctions (and a similar list of S.K. Harzfeld's sales). Frossard then concluded his article with some editorial comments about Emmanuel J. Attinelli's *Numisgraphics*. After praising Attinelli's magnum opus, Frossard noted that "the edition was unfortunately so small that it very soon became exhausted. A second edition, enlarged and brought up to January 1, 1882, would undoubtedly be received with pleasure by collectors of numismatic literature in general and would be a great practical use to those who make the collection of coin catalogues a specialty." This suggestion went unheeded for nearly a century, until Quarterman Publications finally came out with a reprint in 1976 featuring a foreword and price guide by John Adams. Frossard's observation, however, does suggest that there may have been more bibliomaniacs in the numismatic world of 1882 than we have heretofore suspected.

History, it is said, goes around in cycles. The bust in special editions has not recurred, lamentably for your columnist who would then be an avid buyer. But numismatic bibliophiles A, B, and C still bid nondescript catalogues out of sight, continue to argue about whether reputed catalogues actually exist, and still wish certain books reprinted. The Sage of Irvington may be with us no longer, but the lure of the printed word about coins waxes stronger than ever. May it still be true when all of us have joined Brother Frossard in the land of the unlimited special editions - revised and corrected by the author.

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One of the most important serial publications on numismatic literature we have encountered is currently running in the monthly issues of *The Celator, Journal of Ancient Art and Artifacts*. Written by N.B.S. member Dennis Kroh, each month's installment is a monograph evaluating, rating (from 5 to -1 stars), and pricing the works of a specific area of Ancient Coinage. Covered since the series began in November 1990 have been Roman Empire - Handbooks, References, and Published Collections; Ancient Greek Coins - Handbooks, References, and Published Collections; SNG Series; Books on Byzantine; Roman Republican; Ancient Judaic and Biblical Coinage; Greek Coinage of Syracuse and Sicily; the Seleucid Kingdom; Roman Provincial ("Greek Imperials"). All back issues are available and may be obtained by writing The Celator, Box 123, Lodi, WI 53555.

## EXHIBIT CATEGORY REPORT

Wayne Homren

As those of you who attended the N.B.S. meeting at the A.N.A. already know, we were successful in our efforts to establish a new A.N.A. exhibit category for numismatic literature. Our Society owes a special thanks to member and ANA Governor Donn Pearlman who made the motion on our behalf at the ANA Board meeting August 12. The motion was carried 8-0 with Jim Halpern not in attendance. As the result of a request from the A.N.A. Board to submit a name by which the award might be known, we have chosen to honor the man who coined the phrase "Buy the book before the coin" by naming the award after pioneer bookseller Aaron Feldman.

By the conclusion of the N.B.S. general meeting four days later, we had met our goal of raising the required \$3,000 endowment. As soon as all pledged amounts have been collected by the Treasurer, we will forward the funds to the A.N.A. We owe our gratitude to the generous members who donated, pledged, or purchased items to help raise the necessary amount.

Now it is up to the rest of us to make it happen. The exhibit category will be in place for the 1992 Annual Convention to be held in Orlando. As a prerequisite for the award consideration, we had submitted with our application the names of John J. Ford, George Kolbe, and Denis Loring as judges. Now it is time to recruit able exhibitors. If you are planning to attend the convention, we encourage you to consider entering an exhibit in this new category. Any topic is fair game, and if you have never exhibited before, don't worry. It is fun and not really all that difficult.

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L. Miles Raisig, longtime N.B.S. member, has submitted an addendum to Forrest Daniel's *Checklist of Numismatic Fiction* (Volume IX N°2). He would include Judith Ann Benner: *Lone Star Rebel*, John F. Blair, 1971. The adventures of a 14 year old Texas youth in and out of the Confederate Army, and his confrontation with counterfeiters whose activities threaten the Southern economy.

## A.N.A. CONVENTION NOTEBOOK

P. Scott Rubin

Sunday, August 11 - 5 A.M: Left Trenton with Sam Colavita. 12 hours and 8 minutes later we were in Chicago. Sam goes into convention security to check in. While waiting for him, I run into Armand Champa, who is worried about Charlie Davis, who had left Louisville nine hours earlier with a truck loaded with Armand's literature exhibit and hasn't been seen since. The good news, however, is that Charlie had already arrived and that Armand's books were safely tucked away in the Security Room. (A big "thank you" to the security guard who didn't notice the 22 cartons of books when Armand inquired if Davis had arrived!). I go to the Holiday Inn to check in, and agree to meet Armand and crew for dinner. At 7:30 we meet Armand, his wife Kay and 2 daughters, Charlie, John Bergman and his wife Mary, John Burns and Wayne Homren at the Hyatt. While waiting for the group to assemble, I meet Fred Lake for first time. Off to the restaurant where we find Superior Stamp & Coin having a Party for Big Spenders. We, of course, are not invited, numismatics not being the main topic at their dinner.

Monday - August 12 - P.N.G. Day: After getting photo ID badge (the first of three I was to acquire), I return to hotel to meet Armand for a quick breakfast and then back to convention. With the help of Ruthann Bretell, I get Exhibitors Badges so Armand and I can meet Charlie, Wayne, Fred and John, who are assembling the 47 case Armand Champa Numismatic Literature Exhibit! The six of us labored (labored as in the case of the guy who has the tough job of being a Playboy photographer) from 9 to 5 to get the job done with James Taylor being coaxed to provide additional space and nearly inciting an international incident (the extra space came from the Russian Mint). My guess it's the biggest display at convention, maybe ever, and it looks great. Q. David Bowers is on one side of us putting up his display of commemorative coinage, while John Kraljevich (the next QDB?) on the other side had counter stamped souvenirs at his display "ANA 100 J.K." with one cent dated for each year (1891-1991). At one of two breaks I'm allowed, I get 2 hot dogs and see Walter Breen and John Ford for first time at the convention. Many people



filter in while we are setting up display: Spangenberg, Hamelberg, Burns, and many others that I meet for the first time. After a couple of hours to rest, out to dinner at Hyatt with Armand, Charlie, John and Mark Auerbach. Back to Hotel 10:30 P.M.

Tuesday August 13: Official opening day of the convention. Went to the dedication of the Numismatic Postage Stamp with John Burns and Fred Lake. Had souvenir cards signed by all the dignitaries present. Ran into Donn Perlman and thanked him for presenting the Numismatic Literature Exhibition class proposal before the A.N.A. board for us. He noted it was a unanimous vote of approval. Back to the N.B.S. table to number copies of the Catalogue of the Armand Champa Exhibition, a beautiful catalogue prepared by George Kolbe. Davis, Homren, Lake and Bergman also pitched in with numbering and table sitting. Bought Pobjoy and French Commemoratives (I was the first buyer of each at the convention!). The England Medal and on and on. Went to Orville Grady's table after Charlie reported sighting a Gilbert Half Cent book with Clarence Edgar's name stamped on the front board. This turned out to be one of the three copies bound in 1941 by John Ford. I buy the book and later get Ford to inscribed the copy as such. Met recently reincarnated bookseller David Sklow. Bought Henry Chapman's 1925 ANA membership card from Charlie. Run into Michael Hodder and go to Mark Auerbach's talk in the Theater; Katens, Clain-Stefanelli, Carl Feldman, Gordon Frost, etc also were in attendance.

Wednesday August 14: Spent the day collecting Passport coins for my daughter, looking at the Trompeter coins and Bowers and Broadway exhibits. Managed to get Newman & Bressett to autograph my copy of the A.N.A. anthology, and Fivaz and Stanton to autograph Cherry Pickers Guide II. Off to Ford's great talk in the Theater. Curators ran away with World Series Semi-final. Denis Loring and I decide to market a plan whereby books are slabbed with a micro dot containing the contents of the book. Maybe we should copyright the idea before David Hall claims it. Loring showed me 1794 Double struck large cent. Saw, but didn't buy, the Noyes books on Large Cents. Went to Superior's meeting on New Auctions. Dinner at Italian restaurant at Hyatt with crazy waitress. Ken, Myron and his wife Daryl, Armand, Barry Tayman, Charlie Davis, Wayne Homren and Joel Orosz. Left C.P.A. Myron to deal with the tab: \$70 for a salad!! N.B.S. Board Meeting at 8 P.M. accomplished quite a bit with minutes hopefully in a later issue of *The Asylum*.

Thursday August 15: Sam Colavita wants to leave 5 AM Friday instead of staying the week. Back to N.B.S. table to number more Champa booklets and prepare for N.B.S. meeting. I could not find the agenda list, so we'll wing it. The room filed up; I am so confused I tell board member Champa not to sit at board table (sorry about that, Armand!). I also forget to let John Wilson greet the group on behalf of the A.N.A; after being reminded, he speaks. The room is filled with book people, numismatists, and a combination of the two. Armand Champa Award given to Kolbe and Collins (our founders). Linda Kolbe is given a certificate of recognition (their 30th anniversary was observed several days earlier, and after 30 years of book talk



from George she deserves an award. What a great couple!) The Aaron Feldman award is given to Armand Champa for his work in promoting numismatic literature and our organization. Kay Champa is also the recipient of a richly deserved award for all she has done to make visitors feel at home when visiting Louisville. Denis Loring, development officer par excellence, passes the box (no one wears hats these days) to help fund the Numismatic Literature Exhibition Class approved by the A.N.A. Board. Aaron Feldman, a good friend and one of the few people who supported numismatic knowledge as the main reason for collecting numismatic items, is honored by having the exhibit award named in his memory. George Kolbe donates a two volume set of John Adams' Numismatic Literature, autographed by all members in attendance at the meeting. John Bergman outduels Dan Hamelberg and pays \$750, perhaps a steal when you consider that a leatherbound Judd, signed by 50 numismatists in 1970 fetched \$3300 last year. V.P. Homren donates one of three Armand Champa refrigerator magnets he had made up. Each has an identical picture of a standing Armand Champa. Wayne retains one, gives one to Armand and Charlie Davis is the winner of the third. I then present a talk on the Gilbert Half Cent book, which hopefully will lead to a paper to be published in *The Asylum*. Michael Hodder is the second speaker, and his discussion on the development of the cataloger's style is published in this issue. That evening, we reconvene for Armand's symposium with John Adams, Kolbe, Ford, myself and Moderator Champa talking books. As if Armand had not done enough already, he donated several hundred books and catalogues to attendees. Included were a Stickney with plates, a John Story Jenks without, plated Cogans, early auction sales and the first two volumes of the *Numismatic Scrapbook*. And George Kolbe donates an Adams Volume II. (Now, don't you wish you'd been there!) The night and the convention for me end with the N.L.G. bash. Bowers gets Book of the Year for *The A.N.A. Centennial History*, Lovejoy best catalogue ... back to New Jersey.

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## THE ARMAND CHAMPA EXHIBIT

Charles Davis

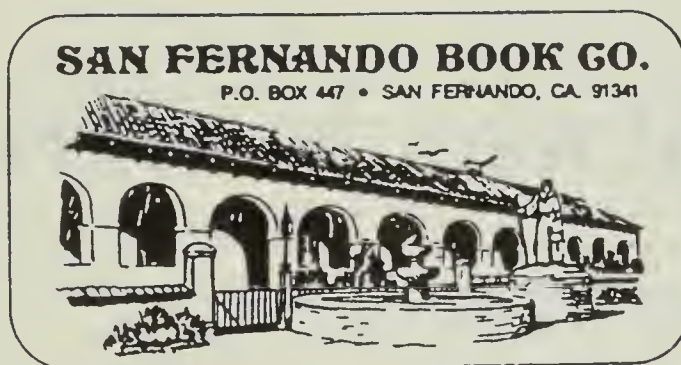
Those of you who read only *Coin World* may be completely unaware of the highlight of the A.N.A.'s 100th Anniversary Convention in Rosemont, Illinois - *Numismatic Americana from the Library of Armand Champa*. Consisting of forty-seven Allstate cases filled with selections from the Champa Library, this "non-competitive" exhibit displayed many of the rarest and most significant auction catalogues, standard references, fixed price lists, periodicals and other memorabilia of our numismatic heritage.

Each individual who viewed the exhibit will remember several items of special personal importance, perhaps related to his collecting specialty. For me, it began at Case N<sup>o</sup>1 with The Mickley Diary. Open to the page where its

writer records the discovery of the theft of a portion of his collection on April 13, 1867, Mickley notes he has alerted local coin dealers, received their sympathetic visits, placed his remaining coins in safekeeping at the Mint (!), entertained Haseltine and Idler (unsuccessful bidders?), and finalized the sale of the balance to Elliot Woodward on April 30. His purchase of a bond in the amount of \$10,000 on May 17 indicates the magnitude of the transaction and the speed, five weeks from robbery to payment, with which it was undertaken.

Later cases included the most complete collection of plated Elder sales, complete small plated Chapmans, a prospectus to Attinelli, The Thian Register with two of the six currency albums originally prepared, the Lee work on Confederate Currency, Franklin Pierce's copy of Ormsby, no fewer than nine leather bound Mehls, Edgar Adams' notebook on Hard Times Tokens, five copies of Crosby including two from the author's estate, leatherbound editions of The Bond Detector, Browning, Marvin, Newcomb, Snowden ... and a dazzling display of Alan Grace's finest craftsmanship.

Augmenting the display was an Exhibition Catalogue prepared by George Kolbe designed to compliment its visual aspects. In his inimitable style, Mr Kolbe has, for each of 119 items, highlighted the historical significance, rarity, and provenance of the particular copy displayed. Published in an edition of 1,500 and nearly fully distributed, we have retained approximately 50 copies and will send one to any N.B.S. member who was not at the Convention. Please address your request to the Editor, and enclose \$2.00 for postage.



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## ALFRED SZEGO A REMEMBRANCE

George Kolbe

I initially became acquainted with Al Szego in the late 1970's when he started participating in our numismatic book sales. A few years later, I met him at a New York coin show. For the most part, though, our business relationship and subsequent friendship was carried on via the telephone. In the late 1980's, Al became more loathe to travel, and I did not see him often at the annual New York sales, although last year was a welcome exception.

In between, we (mostly Al) contributed to the welfare of the verbal communications business. Rarely, if ever, would a sale go by without hearing from him. Along with his bids there was usually a moment or two of friendly conversation. It was hard to hang up the phone and not feel better than before. Scholarly, seemingly shy and retiring, Al was, above all, a people person.

He once told me about his entrance into the coin business. In 1955, Al was a television repairman at the time when there were not two TV's in the house and a VCR in every den. He was not overly busy, and the bank account was low. Concerned and caring about other people to a fault, Al probably spent more helping the owners than fixing their television sets.

One of his customers planned to pay part of an overdue bill by selling a large accumulation of old coins to local dealer. Al figured that if the coin dealer was offering \$30.00 he could afford to deduct \$35.00 from the repair bill in exchange. Toting home a big box of foreign coins, it occurred to him that he knew nothing about them. With the help of J. W. Scott's and Wayne Raymond's *Coins of the World*, and not least, Augusta, - his "partner in life and business" as she terms it - they went to work. Soon there was a pile of coins, less than one-fourth by volume, with a total "catalogue" value of \$200.00. Their first ad in *Popular Mechanics*: 32 foreign coins and a price list for \$1.00 was a resounding success.

By the time I became acquainted with Al, he had already amassed an impressive numismatic library. Mention a standard work, and he had it. I liked the way he bid in my sales and the many European sales where I acted on his behalf. If he did not really need a book, he might bid two-thirds or so of the estimate. If the book was important to his researches, however, he rarely lost it. When he did, it was invariably with good grace.

Al's many kindnesses, joy of life and thirst for knowledge will always be remembered by those fortunate enough to have known him. Numismatic researcher and author, amateur botanist and talented artist among other accomplishments, Alfred Szego, large in both intellect and stature, was a gentle giant.

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